

WARM PURPLE HULL PEA & CORN SALAD

Removing peas from a pod is referred to in old Southern US vernacular as hulling and widely known as shelling across the globe. Whatever the term, pea shelling should be the next great team sport! Every June the residents of Emerson, Arkansas, vie to make the Pea Shelling Hall of Fame -- risking blackened fingers, sore thumbnails and aching hands for glory. Gather the children, grandkids, neighbor's kids, pets & co-workers and hold your own pea shelling competition: set out some guidelines such as time limits, amounts of unshelled peas, how much volume to fill with shelled peas, penalties for how many peas land outside of collection vessel etc. - and then let the games begin. (I was able to shell 1 pound in 15 minutes, with 20 peas outside of the collection bowl, 3 of which landed in a strainer close by, and 1 of which launched across the room (image 1) For comparison, a shelling machine can finish a 5 gallon bucket in 15 minutes....and a shelling champion can collect between 10 -15 ounces (depending on quality) of Purple Hull Peas in 5 minutes! No matter the speed or tenacity used to shell the peas, the real fun part is eating them afterwards for their garden-fresh taste of refreshing pea, savory protein and toothsome texture.

Ingredients

1-pound Purple Hull Peas, about 2 Cups shelled

4 ears Corn, husks & silks removed

1 small Yellow Onion, about 6 ounces

2 stalks Celery, roughly chopped

2 Bay leaves

1 teaspoon whole White Peppercorn

1 Tablespoon blended oil

1 or 2 Jalapeños, finely diced

1 teaspoon Salt

Directions

Trim the ends from onion and then peel before placing in a medium saucepan. Dice onion and set aside, Remove the corn kernels and then take the cobs and place in saucepan with onion trimmings, celery, bay leaves and peppercorns. Bring to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Strain off the corn stock, wipe out the pan and return to heat. Add oil and onions and peas and allow to cook for 3 or 4 minutes over medium heat, stirring occasionally. When the onion has softened but not beginning to brown, add the corn stock and cook for 10 minutes at a simmer. Add jalapeno and corn kernels and continue to cook for a further 8 minutes. If too much of the liquid has reduced, reduce the heat and partly cover with a lid so that it does not dry out, but most of the liquid will have reduced by the time the corn has cooked through and peas are not crunchy but are still firm. Season to taste with salt before serving with grilled meats and steamed potato, as pictured.